

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANTANA 00992 010907Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 IO-13 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
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PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /106 W
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R 010822Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 582
INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
AMEMBASSY VICTORIA
USCINCEUR
CINCPACFLT
CINCUSNAVEUR

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1. FRENCH-LANGUAGE DAILY MADAGASCAR-MARTIN OF MAY 31 CARRIED
FIRST INDEPENDENT COMMENTARY ON RECENT EVENTS IN COMOROS,
THE ONLY NEWS PREVIOUSLY AVAILABLE HERE HAVIIG BEEN REPRINTS
OF WIRE SERVICE DESPATCHES. THIS JOURNAL CAN BE EXPECTED
TO HEW FAIRLY CLOSELY TO THE GOVERNMENT LINE.

2. THE ARTICLE IN QUESTION CONCERNS THE DEATH OF THE FORMER
COMORIAN CHIEF OF STATE AND STATES THAT ALL EVIDENCE POINTS TO
THE KILLING HAVING BEEN DELIBERATE RATHER THAN THE RESULT OF
AN ESCAPE ATTEMPT. EVIDENCE CITED INCLUDES FACTS THAT SOILIH
HAD BEEN SO EASILY ARRESTED, THAT HE WAS GUARDED BY THE TRAINED
FOREIGN MERCENARIES WHO HAD EFFECTED COUP, AND THAT THEY WOULD
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HAVE LITTLE INTEREST IN ESCAPING GIVEN DISLIKE OF HIM BY
COMORIAN POPULATION. ARTICLE CONCLUDES THAT THIS EVENT GIVES
REASON TO DOUBT SINCERITY OF DESIRE FOR CONCILIATION PROFESSED
BY NEW REGIME.

3. STRONGER SYMPATHY WAS SHOWN FOR SOILIH BY AN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCE-
MENT IN CONNECTION WITH RECENT DISTURBANCES IN ANTANANARIVO

REPORTED ELSEWHERE. IN COMPARING THESE DISTURBANCES WITH OTHER
EVENTS IN THE REGION THE SPOKESMAN REFERRED TO ALI SOILIH AS
A "REVOLUTIONARY PIONEER."

4. COMMENT. IT IS A BIT STRANGE TO SEE THIS TENTATIVE POSTHUMOUS
REHABILITATION OF ALI SOILIH. SINCE THE DECEMBER 1976 MASSACRE
OF COMORIANS IN THE PROVINCIAL CITY OF MAJUNGA THE MALAGASY
GOVERNMENT HAS DONE ITS BEST TO IGNORE SOILIH AND THE COMOROS,
EXCEPT WHEN IT WAS NECESSARY TO REPLY TO COMORIAN COMPLAINTS.
COMORIAN OFFICIALS PASSING THROUGH MADAGASCAR HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY
IGNORED BY THE MALAGASY AUTHORITIES. IT HAS POSSIBLY ALREADY BEEN
CONCLUDED THAT THE NEW REGIME IS BOUND TO BE CONSERVATIVE AND
THEREFORE OF LITTLE INTEREST TO THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF
MADAGASCAR.
BARRETT

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